ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

Millennial Star

No. 12 Vol. 106
DECEMBER 1944

"JESUS WAS BORN IN A STABLE . . . . A REAL STABLE IS THE ABODE OF CATTLE, THE PRISON-HOUSE OF THOSE ANIMALS THAT WORK FOR MAN. THE REAL STABLE CONSISTS OF FOUR WALLS, A DIRTY PAVEMENT AND A TILED ROOF SUPPORTED BY BEAMS. THE REAL STABLE IS DARK AND EVIL-SMELLING; NOTHING IN IT IS CLEAN, SAVE THE MANGER, WHERE THE MASTER PREPARES THE FORAGE.

GRASS AND FLOWERS, DRY GRASSES AND FLOWERS THAT ARE STILL SCENTED, LIE IN THE MANGER, TO APPEASE THE HUNGER OF THE SERVANTS OF MAN. THE CATTLE SLOWLY CURL THEIR THICK BLACK LIPS ABOUT THE HAY, AND IN DUE COURSE THE FLOWER-DECKED MEADOW, TRANSFORMED, RETURNS TO LIGHT AGAIN UPON THE STRAW THAT FORMS THEIR BED.

IN SUCH A STABLE AS THIS JESUS WAS BORN. THE DIRTIEST SPOT ON EARTH WAS TO BE THE FIRST DWELLING-PLACE OF THE ONLY PURE ONE, BORN OF WOMAN. THE SON OF MAN, DESTINED TO BE DEVOURED BY BEASTS BEARING THE NAME OF MEN, WAS FIRST CRADLED IN THE MANGER WHEREIN ANIMALS FEED UPON THE BLOSSOMS OF SPRING."

FROM PAPINI'S "STORY OF CHRIST"

"But in the last days it shall come to pass that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the tops of the mountains . . . .

And many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

And He shall judge among many people and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plow-shares and their spears into the pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Micah 4:1-3).

THE 'MILLENNIAL STAR'

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MONTHLY MAGAZINE ON MORMONISM

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To all

The Season's Greetings

"Millennial Star"

No Peace Without Goodwill

Commenting on the Dumbarton Oaks Plan, a major point of which was the establishment of a Security Council, the "Daily Telegraph" said:

"AS LONG AS GOODWILL PREVAILS ON THE SECURITY COUNCIL, BUT ONLY SO LONG, PEACE WILL BE SAFE."

HERE is the key to a situation which must soon be met and efficiently disposed of if, after more than five years of dreadful holocaust, we are to have peace at all in this world. Almost nineteen and a half centuries have passed by since an angel of the Lord uttered those words during the most wonderful event of all time to shepherds in the night of the first Christmas.

While we respect the efforts of mankind to plan a stable world; while we examine with interest the suggestions for re-organisation and reconstruction of clever and thoughtful men; while we appreciate their earnest endeavours to promote peace among all nations, we would adjure them to bring God into their councils. He, who gave His Son that men might live, could help them live the abundant life, could guide them all to perfect peace if they would but listen to Him speak. His priesthood is on earth to-day! His prophets stand at the head of these quorums! Within the confines of His Church in very recent times they have shown that God has spoken and led them to economic security.

Let the world take head! Let God speak—and let men listen!

CONFERENCE MESSAGE
of
PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

This special message by President Grant was read at the opening session of the 115th Semi-Annual General Conference, Friday, October 6th, at 10 a.m., in the Salt Lake Tabernacle.

AGAIN, my brethren, I am privileged to be with you in another general conference of the Church, and I bear testimony that I know it is by the healing and sustaining power of God that I am here. In another six or seven weeks, the Lord being willing, I shall begin the eighty-ninth year of my life; and shall have completed sixty-two years since I became one of the apostles; and shall have served twenty-six years as president of the Church. In all this, and in much else, the Lord has blessed me richly; and I am grateful I can say that I am better now than I have been during some of the weeks and months just passed. I come to the office nearly every day, and I refrain from speaking to you now only on counsel of my doctor, whose advice I usually take.

I thank the Latter-day Saints from the bottom of my heart for their faith and for their prayers in supplicating God in my behalf, for his spirit, for health, for vigour in body and mind. I am here as a witness that God does hear and answer prayer, and I pray that his blessings may be upon Israel and upon all honest men everywhere.

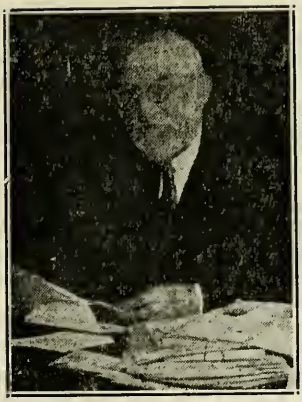
BLESSING TO THOSE WHO WORK IN THE CHURCH

I desire especially to extend my blessing to all the men and women who preside in all the stakes of Zion throughout the Church, in all the missions, in all the wards, in all the quorums of the priesthood, and in all the auxiliary organisations. I am convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt that there cannot be found in any part of the world other men and women giving so unselfishly of their time, of their talents, and of the best that is in them, for the salvation of the souls of men. I am satisfied that there are no other people who are devoting more of their time, of their money, of their thoughts, and of their very being for the advancement of God's work at home and abroad, than are the Latter-day Saints. And with all the power that God has given me, I desire to bless the men and women who are thus giving their time and thought and are setting examples that are worthy of imitation, not only to those over whom they preside, but to all men. Every man and woman who is labouring for the salvation of the souls of men and keeping the commandments of God is entitled to be blessed, and I pray God that his blessings may come to them.

FAITH AND PROTECTION OF OUR YOUTH

Particularly in this critical time, do I pray for the youth of this generation, and for all those who labour for and with them, and who are responsible for their instruction. Their lives are beset by many temptations and evils and designs by those whom the Lord has chosen to refer to as "conspiring men." I pray that those who are at home and those who are away, in the armed forces and elsewhere, will be kept from evil in all its forms, by the prayers and righteous examples of their parents, by remembrance of the teachings in their homes and Church, by their own faithfulness and prayerfulness, and by the protecting influence of the angels of heaven.

There comes to mind an experience in connection with my brother, Fred, after our father died. Because of the mistreatment of a stepfather, and neglect, as a



young man my brother ran away, and I was told by Brother Mariner W. Merrill, at that time Bishop of Richmond, Utah, that the night after my brother ran away, he, Brother Merrill, went to bed rebellious. He said:

"I turned to my wife, Sister Merrill, and said, 'I feel that the Lord should have inspired me to take that boy away from the man who has reared him. He has abused and beaten him. His father is dead, and his mother has left the Church and now he has gone out into world with no hope that he will ever come back again.'"

And that night, so Brother Merrill told me, he had a dream in which he saw my brother in all kinds of wicked company in many different states, and he saw that a light surrounded him. In the dream he said: "What does that light mean?" And a voice answered: "That is the influence that a faithful, God-fearing and God-serving father can have over a son to keep him from going astray, and to eventually bring him back to the truth."

Years later when my brother did come back and joined the Church, as I related here last conference, he fulfilled Brother Merrill's dream, because Brother Merrill said that he saw him labouring all over the Church, bringing wayward boys to a knowledge of the truth, and he did labour from Canada to Mexico in that service.

I am sure that we need a light to surround our boys and girls in this day, and I pray that the protecting influence of faithful, God-fearing, God-serving parents may follow them and keep them wherever they go. I believe that with the faithfulness and obedience of parents and proper influences in the home, and with proper instruction and example to youth, we can keep them from all the temptations of the evil one.

I sympathise with our young people because of these temptations that beset them. I urge them, as I always have, to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ fully. In that way they will have health and happiness and will meet with success in this life and will have an eternity of joy in store for them in the life to come. I bless them with courage to meet the problems that lie ahead.

CONCERNING CHASTITY

I want to say also at this time that the crying evil of the age is lack of chastity. There is but one standard of morality in the Church of Christ. We have been taught, thousands of us who have been reared in this Church from our childhood days, that second only to murder is the sin of losing our chastity; and I want to say to the fathers and to the mothers, and to the sons and daughters, in our Primary, in our Mutual Improvement Association, in our seminaries and institutes, in Sunday School, in the Relief Society, and in all of our priesthood quorums—I want it understood that the use of liquor and tobacco is one of the cheif means in the hands of the adversary whereby he is enabled to lead boys and girls from chastity.

Nearly always those who lose their chastity first partake of those things that excite passions within them or lower their resistence and becloud their minds. Partaking of tobacco and liquor is calculated to make them a prey to those things which, if indulged in, are worse than death itself. There is no true Latter-day Saint who would not rather bury a son or a daughter than to have him or her lose his or her chastity

—realising that chastity is of more value than anything else in all the wide world.

The devil is ready to blind our eyes with the things of this world, and he would gladly rob us of enternal life, the greatest of all gifts. But it is not given to the devil, and no power will ever be given to him, to overthrow any Latter-day Saint who is keeping the commandments of God. There is no power given to the adversary of men's souls to destroy us if we are doing our duty. But if we are not absolutely honest with God, then we let the bars down, then we have destroyed part of the fortifications by which we are protected, and the devil may come in. But no man who was chaste and who was keeping the other commandments of the Lord has ever lost the testimony of the gospel, no man who had the knowledge of the truth has ever turned to the right or to the left, who was keeping the Word of Wisdom, who was paying his tithing, who was responding to the calls and duties of his office and calling in the Church.

More than ever before, we as a people are scattered abroad throughout the world, we carry upon our shoulders the reputation, so to speak, of the Church, every one of us. And the young men and young women of to-day who think they are being smart by getting a little wine and a little liquor in their homes, and doing that which the Lord tells them not to do, are laying a foundation that will lead to their destruction eventually. They cannot go on breaking the commandments of the Lord without getting into the rapids. And what are the rapids? The rapids of moderate drinking, nine times out of ten, lead to excessive drinking, and excessive drinking leads to the destruction of the body and of mind and of faith.

Any Latter-day Saint who actually believes in the commandments contained in the Doctrine and Covenants must have no regard for advancement in life when he fails to keep what is known as the Word of Wisdom. There is absolutely no benefit to any human being derived from breaking the Word of Wisdom, but there is everything for his benefit, morally, intellectually, physically, and spiritually in obeying it.

What does the Lord say to those who obey his commandments?

"And all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones;

"And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures;

"And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint.

"And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them."

May every father and mother so order their lives that their example will be an inspiration to their children, and may all realise that every Latter-day Saint carries, to a certain extent, upon his or her shoulders the reputation of the Church of Christ. We are trying to raise our children to be God-fearing, and to live lives worthy of the imitation of all men. May we read the revelations of the Lord Almighty and his Son Jesus Christ, that have been given to us, as contained in the Doctrine and Covenants; may we read them with a prayerful and a humble heart, seeking God for power and strength to live them, whether we are at home or away from home; and may we listen and give heed to the counsel of our leaders who are with us to-day, I pray with all the power that I possess.

THE POWER OF PRAYER

I have little or no fear for the boy or the girl, the young man or the young woman, who honestly and conscientiously supplicates God daily for the guidance of His Spirit. I am sure that what temptation comes they will have the strength to overcome it by the inspiration that shall be given to them. Supplicating the Lord for the guidance of His Spirit places around us a safeguard, and if we earnestly and honestly seek the guidance of

the Spirit of the Lord, I can assure you that we will receive it. I am convinced that one of the greatest and one of the best things in all the world to keep a man true and faithful in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, is to supplicate God secretly in the name of His Son, for the guidance of His holy Spirit.

I am convinced that one of the greatest things that can come into any home to cause the boys and girls in that home to grow up in a love of God, and in a love of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is to have family prayer. It is not for the father of the family alone to pray, but for the mother and for the children to do so also, that they may partake of the spirit of prayer, and be in harmony with the Spirit of the Lord. I believe that there are very few who go astray, that very few lose their faith, who have once had a knowledge of the gospel, and who never neglect their prayers in their families, and their secret supplications to God.

But the minute a man stops supplicating God for His Spirit and direction, just so soon he starts out to become a stranger to Him and His works. When men stop praying for God's Spirit, they place confidence in their own unaided reason, and they gradually lose the Spirit of God, just the same as near and dear friends, by never writing to or visiting with each other, will become strangers. We should all pray that God may never leave us alone for a moment without His Spirit to aid and assist us in withstanding sin and temptation.

I want to say that my heart goes out in the deepest sympathy and in as deep and sincere prayer as I have ever offered for the comforting influence of the Lord to be given to the brethren and sisters who have sons and brothers and fathers and husbands in the war at the present time. I pray that the ord will bless each and every boy who has gone into the service, and that He will help each of them to live in accordance with the principles of the gospel, so that each may have a claim to the blessings of the Lord to the full extent that accords with His wisdom.

I am praying with all my heart and soul for the end of this war as soon as the Lord can see fit to have it stop. And to those homes that have been sorrowed by the loss of loved ones through death, may the peace and understanding and comfort of our Father in heaven be there unfailingly. And to you who are bereaved by the cruelty of war, I say, do not look forward to a life of care and trouble and anxiety, but look only to the duties and responsibilities of a single day, and by performing the duties each day that rest upon you, the burdens will be lightened, notwithstanding all the sorrow that may come into your lives and the many things that may be hard for you to bear.

I know the anguish of your feelings, and I can say this to you out of the sorrows of my own life. I have been blessed with only two sons. One of them died at five years of age and the other at seven. My last son died of a hip disease. I had built great hopes that he would live to spread the gospel at home and abroad and be an honour to me. But he was taken, as some of your sons have been taken. And never in my life am I so grateful for the Gospel of Jesus Christ as I am when some of my family or beloved friends are called home to their final reward. There is nothing in the revelations of God to Joseph Smith for which I am more grateful than the following quotations from what is known as "The Vision," namely, the 76th section of the Doctrine and Covenants.

"And this is the gospel, the glad tidings, which the voice out of the heavens bore record unto us—

"That He came into the world, even Jesus, to be crucified for the world, and to sanctify the world, and to cleanse it from all unrighteousness:

"That through Him all might be saved whom the Father had put into His power and made by Him;

"Who glorifies the Father, and saves all the works of His hands, except those sons of perdition who deny the Son after the Father has revealed Him." (D & C 76:40-43).

"And now, after the many testimonies

which have been given of Him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives;

"For we saw Him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that He is the Only Begotten of the Father—

"That by Him, and through Him, and of Him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God." (D & C. 76:22-24).

I know as well as I know anything in this life that Jesus Christ is in very deed the Saviour of mankind, and that God has seen fit to establish the Church of Jesus Christ upon the earth. I thank the Lord that I have an abiding knowledge of God, our Father, and Jessus Christ, His Son, and that I have pleasure in bearing witness to all the world of this knowledge that I possess.

Death has no real terror to any true Latter-day Saint. A faithful Latter-day Saint has been blessed with a testimony of the divinity of the work in which we are engaged, and he knows that when he passes to the other side he will have an eternity of joy and happiness, and this I promise you—you who have lived righteously and who offer your lives in the service of your country, and you who live righteously and are left to wait, and sometimes to mourn.

Let us realise that God is mightier than all the earth. Let us realise that if we are faithful in keeping the commandments of God and cherishing the principles inspired of Him, His promises will be fulfilled to the very letter. For He has said that not one jot or tittle shall fall to the ground unfulfilled. The trouble is, the adversay of men's souls blinds their minds. He throws dust, so to speak, in their eyes, and they are blinded with the things of this world, and the adversary obtains power over them, and robs them of their freedom, which is what he tried to do in the beginning.

I say to you, Latter-day Saints, that the pearl of great price is life eternal. God has told us that the greatest of all the gifts He can bestow upon man is life eternal. We are labouring for that great gift, and it will be ours if we keep the commandments of God. One fundamental thing for a Latter-day Saint is to be honest. Another is to value his word as faithfully as his bond; to make up his mind that under all circumstances, no matter how hard it may be, by and with the help of the Lord, he will dedicate his life and his best energies to making good his promise, and that he will not permit some personal advantage to cause him ever to compromise his principles.

I say to you that it is not an insignificant thing to hold the priesthood of God—to have the right to influence the powers of the heavens for good; and it is not a slight thing for us to neglect to honour the priesthood of God in those who preside over us, not to ignore them in their counsel. My faith is such that I could lay down all that I possess rather than ever depart from the Latter-day work. I value all things as nothing in comparison with having the Spirit of God to guide me. And I promise you, as a servant of the living God, that every man and woman who obeys the commandments of God shall prosper in righteousness, that every promise made of God shall be fulfilled upon their heads, and that they will grow and increase in wisdom, light knowledge, intelligence, and, above all, in the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ. May God help each and every one of us who has a knowledge of the gospel to live it, that our lives may preach its truth.

TESTIMONY

I leave with you my testimony that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph Smith was and is a prophet of God. How do I know it? I know it as well as I know that I live. I know heat; I know cold; I know joy, and I know sorrow; and say to you that in the hour of sorrow, in the hour of death, God has heard and answered my prayers, and I know that he lives. I leave my testimony with you.

Greetings from . . .

Auxiliary Organisations of British Mission Relief Society Board

I would like to express my gratitude for the privilege of having met so many good sisters during our present Conferences. That personal contact has been very fine. I have appreciated very much your warm hospitality and the welcome afforded us at all times.

The co-operative spirit has been made manifest through the increased sale of Magazines and the improvement in Record keeping is very hopeful. May we ask our Heavenly Father's blessings on our lips, our hands, and our hearts during the coming year, that we may lose ourselves in service for His people among whom we tread.

FLORENCE B. DUNN, President

* * *

If we, as members of the greatest cause on earth will "Build," with Faith, Hope and Charity, and leave dissension and uncharitableness to those of ill-will, then can we pray in earnestness and with hope for "Peace an earth and good will to all men."

HELEN E. POOLE, 1st Counsellor

* * *

We are grateful for this opportunity of sending to our fellow-workers in the Relief Society our sincere Christmas greetings and best wishes. May you all be blessed both materially and spiritually at this time and in the Ney Year. It has been pleasing to us to note the accomplishments of this year, and thank you all for the hard work which has been put in and the help you have given us. To those especially who have continued their Relief Society work, meetings, visiting, etc., in spite of the dangers and hazards of the recent aerial attacks on this country, we say, "Well done."

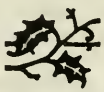
MAUD A. HAWKES, 2nd Counsellor

* * *

As we look back on the year now drawing to a close, do we view with satisfaction the efforts made? Much has been done which is commendable, when we think of the difficulties with which we are surrounded. Yet there is much that can be accomplished in all our Relief Societies throughout the British Isles. It is said that where there is a good Relief Society there is a good Branch. To those who feel their efforts are of no avail, I would say, "Put your shoulder to the wheel. Do your duty with a heart full of song," and let us strike out in the New Year with renewed zeal and determination to make our Relief Society prosper and grow, for the benefit and upliftment of all who come in contact with us who are its representatives.

May God bless each one in their efforts to forget self in Service for others is the prayer of

DORA SMITH, Secretary



SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD

To all members of the Sunday Schools, both young and old, the British Mission Sunday Board extend their greetings and good wishes on the occasion of Christmastide, and the dawning of a New Year.

We can look back over 1944 with much satisfaction because, with the help of faithful brothers and sisters much good has been accomplished within the Sunday Schools. The members of the Mission Board do deeply appreciate the loyal support accorded to the work of educating the young people of the Church, and wish to thank all helpers.

Because of the times in which we are living, an even greater responsibility rests upon the Sunday School; when we look around the world to-day and see so much evil and temptation and sin, and then think of the many young children who have the opportunity of attending an organisation which is always ready to lead and guide them.

May we, who are officers and teachers, sense our great responsibility, and decide within ourselves that "I, for one, will do my part." Christ said "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." How grand, then is our priviledge .

It is a comforting thought to know that, despite the many conflicting religions and teachings prevalent in this day and age, that our children are taught the true principles of the Gospel, and are started on that great highway which leads to life Eternal.

May God bless the work of the Sunday Schools and the workers within them, and may you all experience joy and satisfaction in the knowledge that you are assisting our Father in Heaven to build up His Kingdom upon the earth.

GENEALOGICAL BOARD

Thirty-three years seems a long or short period of time, according to the circumstances.

To persons living joyously, this period of time is fleeting, the happy years glide away so quickly it is hard to believe they have passed.

To a man in prison, the hours drag by on leaden feet. This Christmas Season is the Anniversary of the Birth of Him who burst open the Prison Doors and set the captives free. The Apostle Peter confirms this Ministry to the Dead: "By which also He went and preached unto the Spirits in Prison." For this cause also was the Gospel preached to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit."

To those who waited in the Spirit World how welcome must have been the words, "Peace on earth, good will toward men."

When the good news was given to these people that their Redeemer was born, what a great joy must have filled their bosoms. Their happiness was tempered with the thought that thirty-three years must roll by ere their Deliverer would complete His mission on earth and commence His three-day mission in the World of Spirits.

Thirty-three years is a long time to a man in prison. Does the event of the Saviour's Birth mean much to you? Then it means equally as much to your worthy ancestors in the Spirit World. Have you eagerly grasped the means of deliverance from Sin through Baptism? Then allow those whom you represent on earth the same privilege.

Spare a thought this Christmas for your fathers who have passed on, allow the thought to take root, grow, and bear fruit in the carrying out of the saving ordinances for your own kith and kin.

How long have your ancestors waited in the Prison House, five—ten—one hundred years?

Remember time passes very slowly to a man in prison!

M. I. A.

In accordance with age-old custom, yet no less sincerely, we wish you the season's greetings at this most important and happiest of all festivals of the year. The was has depleted our numbers, but wherever possible, true to our inspirational theme song, we have "carried on." We say "Thanks" to M.I.A. leaders and their supporters throughout the Mission. We know your difficulties and we know that you believe, as we do, that our organisation is "tops" for Youth. We have heard, with great joy, of the M.I.A.'s organised and functioning in the Forces, even "somewhere in France." God bless you. Our prayers are offered up for you. The time is coming when Youth will be needed and relied upon for so much of the world's work; work of a nature that only the fire and zeal of the young will accomplish. Preparation for such responsibility is a feature of M.I.A. The Brave New World we hear so much spoken of will need Leaders! We feel that there are potential leaders all around us. We feel the urge to develop that power in our young men and women, and we supplicate our Lord for His help in that work. To you fighting men, we say, remember the ideals of our organisation. In battles of old it was the regiments' prime duty to keep the standards flying high. Men, don't lower your standards. Live clean, so that if you should be called home in battle you may return to your Father clean. Fighting a tangible enemy is tough, but it's tougher when you can't see him. Beat him, and you can beat all his wicked followers in the flesh. God bless you and keep you.

PRIMARY

CHRISTMAS time is children's time. It is the festival celebrating a birth; the birth in the flesh of the Only Begotten of our Heavenly Father. A birth is a great event in the lives of any husband and wife. How great must have been the occasion to Joseph and Mary.

More information concerning the childhood of Jesus of Nazareth would be of great advantage to us. We would love to be able to tell our children of the little things He probably did that delighted the souls of the carpenter and his wife. We do know that Jesus was a serious-minded boy. Did He not remind His mother of the importance of His career ahead when, discovered by her to be provoking the learned Jews to admiration of His advanced knowledge, he said:

"Wist ye not that I be about My Father's business?"

Our Heavenly Father has much for us to do. Not the least among our tasks is that of guiding and caring for our children in the flesh—His children of the Spirit—what a responsibility!

This Christmastide, think how God watched over His Son during the first thirty-three years of these nineteen hundred and forty-four. What an understanding existed between these two! Christ died that we might live. Let us be about our Father's business and rear children full of the knowledge of the cardinal virtues, FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY.

SERVICEMEN'S LETTER

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS TO SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN

THE Prince of Peace was also a Warrior Prince. He fought valiantly against sin in its varied form and prevailed against the Prince of Evil who thrice tried to disarm Him and thus gain supremacy. The Master was too wise to allow His adversary the advantage of catching Him off guard. He knew better than to go on to enemy territory. He knew the Tempter's invitation to follow a certain course had some sinister motive and, therefore, refused to take the first step, though in itself it seemed harmless. That it was proposed by the enemy was enough for Him. Though hungry He would not eat bread on Satan's terms. Neither personal pride nor spectator's praise could tempt Him to exhibit His power where duty did not require its use. And again He knew a promised gain would be a total loss, though all earthly power could be His upon stated terms. In other words, He was a skilful strategist and more than a match for the chief of the hosts of Beelzebub.

Too many of us are inclined to say "what harm is there in that." "I must be a good fellow." One should never try to be a "good fellow" with "bad fellows." The enemy territory is always sown with mines and traps to destroy the unwary. Every step taken into enemy territory, which has not been swept and purified, is taken at the peril of one's life. Hitler's best craftsmen in the art of camouflage are novices in comparison with the unseen agents of the arch deceiver. His invitations are so seemingly inoccuous, so patently harmless, that sometimes they appear to be advantageous. This enemy has no power over us unless we deliberately go on to his ground.

Before you read another "Star" we shall have celebrated both Christmas and the New Year. The first, in addition to all of the thoughts of home and family which it will inspire, should remind us of the Great Leader whose birth it celebrates. And, while the New Year presents a clean white page to write upon, we do not recommend making boastful resolutions or announcing decisions reached. Each man should thoughtfully examine himself at this mile post in his army service and compare the man he is with the man he was when he left home. This checking on one's position with relation to his starting place will reveal his course. An extension of that line will indicate his goal.

If he is going in the wrong direction, now is the time to change his course. There is hope for a man as long as he has stamina enough to repent and fight on. If 1944 has some blots on the page, observe them only to take warning, spend no time in useless regret, but resolve that 1945 will redeem '44 and leave a credit balance.

You came out of a home which was lit by faith, where there was a quiet courage even in the face of death. Perhaps it was just the sort of simple trust a child has when he takes his father's hand and goes out into the darkness. Home is a shrine to which your thankful recollection turns at this Season of the year. One must "look up" to see that shrine. With lifted head and steady eyes he may see a beacon light which calls him to a new dedication, for behind that shrine is the shadow of the Warrior Prince whose wounded hands reach out with the proffered help, such as can come only from One who has Himself met and overcome the tempter. 1945 will doubtless see the close of hostilities. Now is the opportune time to quietly resolve that it shall be the best year yet lived, for then the lights will come on again, and the home port will appear. May we all get on the beam and follow it to a happy landing.

H. B. B.

CHRIST
CHRISTMAS AND SANTA CLAUS

By T. EDGAR LYON

NO custom is more universally celebrated by Christians than that of Christmas—a festive occasion in commemoration of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. Strange as it may appear, however, Christians in various parts of the world are not agreed concerning the date of the Saviour's nativity. The members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints participate in the Christmas celebrations traditional in those lands in which they live. They do not. however, accept such occasions as the actual date of the birth of Christ. From modern revelation they know that April 6 is his natal day. In various early periods of the Christian era it has been observed in January, March, April, and May. It is strange that the major divisions of Christianity are not agreed concerning this day, some celebrating it in December, others in January. The uncertainty of this date is attested by the prefatory note to the Roman Catholic Christmas masses:

The exact day of our Lord's birth on earth has never been revealed to us; but the Roman Church has, from early ages, set apart for its solemn celebration the twenty-fifth day of December.

In early days of the Roman Church, December 25 was observed as the day of St. Anastasia, a Christian martyr. It was not until late in the fourth century (apparently 353 or 354 A.D.) that the Roman Church first designated December 25 as the day to commemorate the birth of the Messiah.

Why was this done? Apparently the explanation is to be found in the fact that in nearly every western land of the northern hemisphere the closing days of December had, from time immemorial, been the days for the year's greatest festivities. In some northern lands it was the celebration of the winter solstice, when the sun, as it were, was born again. In others, it was the feast of Yule (Jule, Iol, or Iul) in honour of the pagan god, Thor. Romanized lands celebrated with much merriment the Feast of the Saturnalia after December 7. Jews celebrated the "Feast of Lights" (Feast of Dedication) from December 17 to December 25. Mithraism, one of the most widespread of the ancient mystery religions and one of the most serious competitors of Christianity in the early centuries, celebrated the birthday of its god, Mithras, on December 25.

In view of these already widespread customs of feasting and celebrating at this season of the year, and the firmness with which these customs were rooted in the lives of the people, it is no wonder that the Christians superimposed the celebration of Christ's birthday upon this season. By so doing, they accomplished three things. First, they capitalised on the traditional period for festal experiences and made it a season of Christ-centered rejoicing. Second, they weakened the influence that surviving paganism might have on new converts to the Christian Church by offering a substitute for their customary pagan celebrations. Third, they retained, but reinterpreted, gift-giving, prayers, sacrifices, use of lights, colours or other symbolism wherever they had been part of the pagan ceremonies, giving them a significance referring to Jesus.

An acquaintance with the customs connected with the celebration of Christmas in European lands in this century indicates, however, that while the observance of the Saviour's birthday has been adopted as December 25, the old pagan forms were never entirely overcome. For instance, the use of straw goats during the Christmas

season in Sweden is evidently a survival of an ancient pagan fertility cult; the Yule Log is another un-Christian symbol; the fruit or Christmas cakes of most lands, and the use of mistletoe and holly are yet other festival symbols which survived into Christianity for no good reason, except that they were deeply rooted in the social customs of the people.

With the passing of the years, under the teachings of the church leaders, people gradually forgot the ancient pagan celebrations. They entered in the colourful ceremonies of the Christmas season and, after a generation or two, December 25 was accepted in the public mind as the real birthday of the Saviour. The newer generations soon forgot the pagan significance of many of the customs they observed in connection with the activities of the holiday season. In each land distinctive traditions were perpetuated and new ones developed, until in modern times Christmas customs in the different Christian lands are more varied than the languages of those nations. The date of Christmas was about the only thing that all of the lands had in common.

SANTA CLAUS

THERE is also another addition of doubtful value to the Christmas celebration, namely that of Saint Nicholas or Santa Claus. How did this intruder become identified with the Christmas celebration to such an extent that he has almost crowded Jesus out of the Christmas season? St. Nicholas, according to tradition, was Bishop of Myra, Lycia (Asia Minor), in the early fourth century. He was a man of wealth who used his money to do good deeds, but swore those whom he aided to secrecy. He especially protected and befriended students, and provided the dowries for daughters of impoverished parents, that they might marry to their best advantage.

Following his death, many tales were told by his benefactors concerning his magnanimous deeds, and numerous traditions grew up concerning him. He became a saint through popular acclaim and was adopted throughout Europe as the patron saint of boys, girls, students, young ladies seeking suitable marriages, bankers, pawnbrokers, and sailors. So great was his popularity that at one time he was probably revered more than any other saint, with the exceptions of Peter and Mary.

He became the patron saint of Russia and of many of the Italian and Spanish seaports; numerous church edifices in France, Belgium, Germany, and the Scandinavian countries were dedicated to him; in England alone more than four hundred churches were named in his honour. His day, in accordance with the Calendar of Saints commemorated by masses in the Roman Catholic Church, is celebrated December 6.

He was originally depicted in a long robe of bright red, trimmed with gold braid, with a bishop's pointed headdress, wearing sandals and carrying a staff. When his fame spread to Western Europe, the tradition was expanded, and he acquired a donkey and later a white horse on which to ride. Then, in keeping with the custom of gentlemen in medieval Spain, a black slave boy was added to the tradition as an attendant who carried the gifts in a sack which never became empty.

During the days when Spain ruled the Spanish Netherlands (Belgium and Holland) St. Nicholas was adopted as the patron saint of children. Legend soon had him make an annual visit from Spain to the Netherlands, where he rode through the streets, followed by Black Pete, his slave, on the evening of December 5. Children, upon retiring, left hay and carrots in their wooden shoes for his horse to eat while he left gifts for them. His coming was distinctly a children's treat—grown-ups were excluded from his beneficences. It was the time when children acquired the toys and games to keep them entertained during the winter days when they were forced to play indoors.

When the Protestant Reformation swept the Netherlands, the people stormed the Catholic churches, smashing statues and stained-glass windows and destroying or plastering over the mural paintings, which they viewed as idolatrous. In their endeavour to destroy further the outward signs of Roman Catholicism, they abolished the observance of days commemorative of the saints and symbols remininscent of them. St. Nicholas, however, was so much a part of childhood joy that he alone of all the saints was allowed to remain, and in our traditions continued to wear the regalia of the ancient bishop and make his annual mysterious visits.

THE settlement of New Amsterdam and the Hudson valley by the Dutch early in the seventeenth century, resulted in the importation of Saint Nicholas into the American colonies. By the time the British took over the Dutch colonies and New Amsterdam was rechristened New York, the annual visits of the generous saint had become so endeared to the hearts of the settlers that no amount of British opposition could halt his activities. England was at war with Catholic Spain and anything that was reminiscent of either Catholicism or Spain was distasteful to the British mind. Apparently, under the stress of this tense religious and political feeling, the tradition of St. Nicholas and his activities gradually underwent some drastic changes in the minds of the colonists in America. His homeland was changed from Spain to the North Pole. A horse, being unsuited for the snowy north, was exchanged for a sleigh and eight reindeer, the names of which show a combination of English, Dutch, and German influences. His bishop's clothing likewise underwent a transformation, with the bishop's mitre being elongated into a stocking cap, the cloak shortened into a coat, stripped of its gold braid, and ermine substituted for it. A pair of trousers was the essential complement of the coat. Boots were substsituted for the sandals, and a wide black belt, so common on the clothing of gentlemen of the day, drew the coat tightly about him. The Moorish slave was discarded, and the newly garbed saint was able to continue his visits unmolested.
Two additional changes were made. First, the dignified formality of his Dutch name, "Sint Nicholaas," was corrupted in the speech of children and parents alike into the more easily syllabicated "Sinter Klaas." The dropping of the "r," which became customary on the Atlantic seaboard, soon led to "Sinta Klaas," which was anglicised into "Santa Claus." Second, to get away from the Calendar of Saints and its implications, his gift-giving was identified with the gift of the Christchild, and his visit was timed for the eve of the traditional birthday of Christ.

Thus, in America, Saint Nicholas was transformed from the Catholic bishop of legend into the jolly, fat Santa Claus we know today, and superimposed on the Christmas observance. His popularity was so great among both children and adults that returning colonial officials carried news of the reconstructed saint back to England. Soon he was exported to England, and from there his fame spread throughout the empire, where he is now popularly known as "Father Christmas."

There is little logic and much of fabrication in the celebration as we know it, but there is abiding truth in the essential and meaningful observance that remains at the heart of it. Santa Claus may seem to have overshadowed Christ in the popular mind, but to those who listen, penetrating the obscurity of myth and legend, tradition and social custom, the message of the angels sounds above the folk carols; to those who see, the star of Bethlehem shines brighter than tinsel or pagan candle; and to those who feel, the greatest of all gifts is still the gift of the Son whom the Father sent, not to condemn the world, but to redeem it.

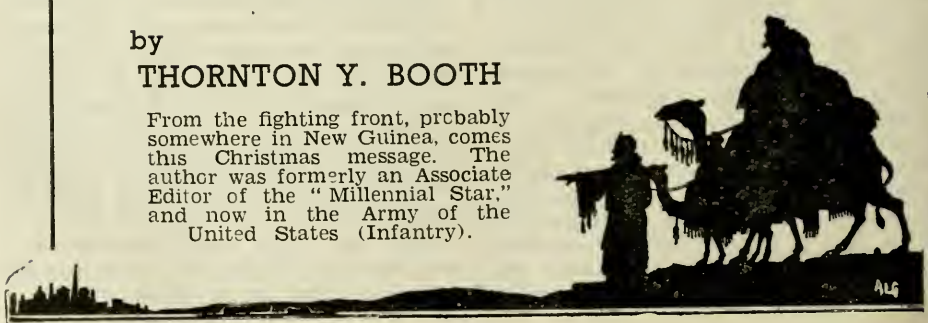
CHRISTMAS PRAYER

DEAR LORD:
I can't repeat the usual Christmas prayer
When "Peace on earth, good will toward men" is but
A tragic mockery. Men seem to care
For nothing now except the means to cut
Their fellows down. Good will and peace are stored
For the duration. And glory Thou
On high art given seems in hope Thy sword
Will conquer opposition quickly—now!
Is this, then, what Thy angels meant that night
In singing "Peace on earth—"? Two thousand years
Of carnage, torture, fear, and "might makes right"?
"Good will toward men—" Does that consist of jeers
(Though sometimes clothed in diplomatic cant)
When conquered peoples ask for charity,
Those weak for help, those poor for food? To grant
Such boons in truly Christian rarity.
Though this may sound impertinent, dear Lord,
I ask Thee, wasn't that an unkind touch
Of Godly irony, directing toward
The earth a peace, good-will pronouncement such
As man had never heard before, proclaimed
By angel song, yet followed by a score
Of war and hate-filled centuries that shamed
Most those who claimed to know Thy gospel lore?
Is it, then, strange that I am filled with doubt
This Christmas, as to what to pray about?

"MY Child,"
The answer seemed quietly to possess
My doubting soul, dismissing fear and strife.
"The angels' message still rings true to bless
Those who will hear. They sang of him whose life
Made possible real peace on earth, whose love
Best demonstrates 'Good will toward men.'

by
THORNTON Y. BOOTH

From the fighting front, probably somewhere in New Guinea, comes this Christmas message. The author was formerly an Associate Editor of the "Millennial Star," and now in the Army of the United States (Infantry).



AND ANSWER

For this, my Son was sent from here above—
To live the way of fullest joy, and then,
Through power undissipated by one breath
Of sin, he blazed the path of glory back
He clearly taught the Plan, there is no lack
Of opportunity or help for those
Who really seek for peace. The thousands who
Have found it through their faith in Me, who chose
To learn the gospel plan and follow through
With living it, have overcome their woe,
Not gaining just the peace the earth imparts,
But that deep comfort only I bestow,
Of unafraid, untroubled, joyful hearts.
It may be true that there has been more strife
Than peace since angels sang that Christmas song.
If so, it is because men chose such life
As brought on war. Wrong always fosters wrong.
A kind, unselfish heart, a soul that's pure—
I, even God, can't *give* men such a thing.
My prophets can but let them know the sure
Inexorable law of harvesting.
Men have my rules, and for themselves must choose
To gain the blessings by obeying them,
Or, as so many have discovered, lose
Their peace—their all—by disobeying them.
When men think they are Christians by the act
They go through once a year of taking care
Of fellow men in want, the ones who lacked
Life's goods the whole year through, let them beware.
And nations, hoping to preserve themselves
By turning eyes aside while tyrants chain
Some weaker people, and cruel power shelves
All promises of justice, hope in vain.
The selfish has his joy cut at the source
Because his year-round habits pinch his soul;
While peoples who ignore the tryant's force
Will find their own loved land his further goal.
And though the war is shattering your world
You may still pray for peace at Christmas time,
If you can keep the flag of faith unfurled,
And let a love-filled heart beat out the chime:
'Good will toward men.' Though you must crush a foe
For his injustice—you will find more peace
In raging strife than you would have with no
Love in your heart, should wars forever cease."

THE paradox of peace in war! ! His word,
Familiar, crossed the centuries: I heard—
"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you:
Not as the world giveth, give I unto you.
Let not your heart be troubled,
Neither let it be afraid."

THE Star of Bethlehem still shines upon the world. Its beacon light penetrates even the thick darkness of these awful years. He whose birth it heralded became the Prince of Peace, and is still the most potent factor in world affairs. His arch enemy had hoped to make the night of war so long and black that they who had believed in the Master's promise of final victory would lose faith and perish before dawn.

There is new hope in the world this Christmastide, a buoyant and dynamic hope which, in some of the Winters of the war, had almost vanished. The new pattern of world affairs which has emerged during the last few months, has steeled the courage of millions and caused prayers of gratitude to ascend from every tongue under Heaven. There is increasing evidence of a Master design behind the puny plans of our great men, and as it unfolds there is a widespread call for a Thanksgiving Service to precede the Conference at the Peace Table. It is hoped that the teachings of the Master will colour and subdue decisions to be reached around that table.

While the Prince of Darkness almost achieved his boasted victory, there were some brave people who had not forgotten the majestic assurance of the Master as He was about to leave His small but loyal band of followers. He said: "All power is given to Me, both in Heaven and on earth." This declaration was made at the beginning of that awful night of darkness which followed His departure, and was given to fortify their faith and steel their courage for the conflict.

The triumphant resurrection of the Lord was a beacon to which they could look and by which they could chart their course through the storms and nights which were to follow. He wished them to know that though at times the rough seas and thick fog might obscure that light, there would never be a time when it was not shining. Amidst all the storms of centuries and the recurring sieges by satanic hordes, this light has remained secure on the immovable rock of eternal truth.

Through the centuries which followed His departure, the people of the world lost their way, not because that light had ceased to shine, but because of sin and transgression, and of false prophets and teachers who led them astray. There was indeed an apostacy from the truths He taught. Apostacy from the Church was followed by apostacy of the Church. Millions thought they were following Him when, in fact, they were following only leaders who had usurped authority and presumed to speak in His name. There was meticulous observance of forms and ceremonies which were never instituted or approved by Him. They had His name on their lips, but their hearts were far from Him. They wandered, too and fro in the earth, seeking the truth but not finding it; they were lost in the night whose darkness covered the earth as the waters cover the deep; they could not see the eternal beacon light because they had gone beyond the horizon where the prince of darkness reigned supreme.

In anticipation of the times through which we now are passing, the Gospel was restored. He came personally and afterwards sent Heavenly Messengers to announce the dawn. He directed those who had the authority at the time. He left them to ordain men so that, in his final struggle with the Adversary, there would be leaders endowed with power from on high, by which they could match and overcome the agents of the Adversary.

The prophecies, declarations and announcements of the Prophet Joseph Smith as recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants, are recognised in the light of history as inspired. The Lord said through the Prophet on many occasions: "A great and marvellous work is about to come forth unto the children of men." Something of the grandeur of this work is glimpsed as one reviews the accomplishments of the century which followed this declaration. It was the most wonderful century of which we have record. The most prolific in new discoveries, the most generous in revealing Nature's secrets and

her wealth; it was the era in which men learned to co-operate with Nature and to utilise her power for their good and benefit.

But he also warned of dangers to come, of wars and contentions in which these inventions and discoveries would be used by Satan's agents to further his purposes and to bring sorrow, destruction and death to the world in unprecedented measure. But He gives the assurance that He will not forsake His people and that His purposes shall not fail. Hear Him as He reminds the Prophet that God is omnipotent "The works and the designs and the purposes of God cannot be frustrated, neither can they come to naught, for God does not walk in crooked paths, neither doth He turn to the right hand nor to the left, neither doeh He vary from that which He hath said, therefore, His paths are straight and His course is one eternal round. Remember, remember, that it is not the work of God that is frustrated but the work of man."

The prophets of former times have never failed to warn the people of perils to come, but have been just as definite in their assurance of final victory. Note the words of John while on the Isle of Patmos as he alternately gives warning and encouragement in the unfolding of His glorious vision. It is "The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto Him .... and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John": "And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals .... and I looked and beheld a pale horse; and his name that set on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill, with sword and with hunger, and with death and with the beasts of the earth."

One could almost imagine John was witnessing an air-raid in 1944 as he describes "locusts." "And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails."

After relating in some detail the great and terrible things which were to come to pass the vision changes and he tells us: "And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying Alleluia: Salvation and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God .... And I saw an Angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him .... And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea .... And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them, and be their God .... And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations .... Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates unto the city."

Surely every nation to-day is in need of the promised healing, but here, as elsewhere, every blessing is predicted upon obedience to law. It is not enough merely to last out the battle but all who share the blessings must earn their reward.

And so at Christmas time we look forward hopefully to the promises which were made by the men of God who so unerringly foretold events which have come to pass. Yes, the Star of Bethlehem still shines upon the world.

HUGH B. BROWN

PALESTINE in the Days of the SAVIOUR

by President Levi Edgar Young *of the FIRST COUNCIL of SEVENTY*

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
From whence cometh my help.
My help cometh from the Lord, which made
Heaven and earth.

(Psalm 121:1,2)

PALESTINE is very small country. If we include the plateau country east of the river Jordan, it is about the size of the state of Vermont or New Jersey. The heart of Palestine, however, where most of the events recorded in the Bible occur, is about eighty-five miles in length by forty-five miles in width. Within this small territory, there are varied scenery and climate. Deserts and mountains are interspersed with beautifully wooded and grassy valleys. No country in the world produces a larger variety of wild flowers, unless it is the Valley of the Great Salt Lake. The beautiful Plain of Sharon has been sung into Hebrew literature by the familiar verse in the Song of Songs: "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." The Saviour walked through fields of anemones, the most abundant and conspicuous flower found in Palestine. The flowers are of different colours —blue, white, and red. But the colour most frequently seen is the brilliant scarlet. One author writes: "It is a gorgeous sight to see a field of these anemones, spread out before us like a gaily coloured carpet. They grow everywhere on the hills and plains, but nowhere are they more beautiful than on the Plain of Sharon, where they are scattered luxuriantly over the broad fields." This was doubtless the flower Jesus plucked and held up before his audience when he said:

. . . Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. (Matt. 6:28, 29).

To the north of the Holy Land lie the mountains of Lebanon, where rises the Jordan River, which flows into the Sea of Galilee—clear, blue, and fresh. The Sea of Galilee is only two and a half miles in length from north to south, and not more than a mile in width. The country around it was watered by streams from the neighbouring hills, and the sun warmed it into tropical fertility. In the time of Christ, the waters of the lake were plied by four thousand vessels of every description, from the war-vessels of the Romans to the fishing-boats of the towns. The plain around the lake was an earthly paradise according to Josephus. To this day, wild flowers spring up everywhere. Tulips, anemones, and irises carpet the ground. The shore of Galilee is "gently embayed and the beach is pearly white and edged by lovely oleanders." The ruins of towns are found along the shores of the lake among which are those of ancient Capernaum. Bethsaida was perhaps the best known of the ancient towns, and "here we may safely fix the scene of the miraculous drought of fishes and the subsequent call of Peter and Andrew, James and John." Northward, about a mile and a half from Bethsaida, was Capernaum, and during the past few years, the Palestine Exploration Fund has discovered the ruins of many of the old synagogues. as well as some Greek temples. Josephus speaks of the many beautiful homes that were erected on the shores of the lake.

Palestine is a country of plains, plateaus, sand-hills, deserts, snow-capped mountains, river-valleys, and mountain gorges. Hot sulphur springs, steep escarpments, and howling wildernesses, caves

for robbers, and volcanic craters, add to the strange character of the land. The cyclamen or lovely primrose is a native of Palestine, and the old-fashioned hollyhock received its name from the holyhocys of the Holy Land. The seeds of the hollyhock were brought into England by the Crusaders in the eleventh century, and the Puritans introduced the flower into Massachusetts. The Spanish padres also brought the seeds of the hollyhock to Spanish America, and in the eighteenth century hollyhocks were growing profusely at the old Spanish missions in California. The maidenhair fern grows in the crevices of the rocks and in the caves. Lilies, crocuses, and narcissi, the red anemones, and wild roses cover the hills in springtime; and the papyrus reed grows in the marshes of the streams. Palestine is the native land of the palm and fir tree, of olives, apricots, figs and grapes.

It is a country for all kinds of birds. Of the ravens alone there are seven different kinds. There are bears, hyenas, wolves, and jackals, lizards, snakes, bats and enormous grasshoppers. Lions lived in the Jordan valley and are often referred to in Holy Writ.

MOUNTAINS AND CLIMATE

HIGH and impressive mountains are characteristic of Palestine. Mount Hermon, to the east of the mountains of Lebanon, Mount Tabor, one of the most beautiful and singular mountains, and Mount Carmel, on the borders of the Mediterranean Sea rise majestically to the sky. The melting snows of the River Jordan, and into the vales of this mountain, some believe Jesus went just before he left Galilee for his final journey to Jerusalem. The cedars of Lebanon are like the redwoods of California, and Isaiah calls them "the glory of Lebanon." It was these trees that Hosea, the poet-prophet, referred to when in his deep feeling he wrote the beautiful words found in the Book of Hosea (14:4-7):

I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him.

I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.

His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon.

They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine; the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.

Mount Carmel is called the mountain of rains. Located on the Mediterranean Sea, it rises eighteen hundred feet above the sea, and owing to the heavy dew that falls every night, it is green the year round. It is a perfect garden of foliage as it towers above the wheat fields and vineyards, orchards and groves of oak. "It was always a sacred retreat; even before the Hebrews found it, its caverns and oak groves offered seclusion for those who wished to meditate." Here Elijah brought the people to raise their thoughts of God above the common level. Beautifully has Elijah's life been connected with the idea of a divine Providence ruling nature and sending the rains for the fields and providing the "many waters!" (I Kings 18:20-46).

Palestine, like our own country, has both a dry and a rainy season. The winter, from November to April, is the time of rains, but when the winter fails to bring moisture, there is danger of a famine in the land. During the reign of King Ahab, there were three years of drought, and the people suffered greatly. Elijah's words to Ahab, the king of Israel, are indicative of his concern for the welfare of the people. He has been called "the grandest and most romantic character that Israel ever produced." In days of famine he had that faith that caused the rains to descend upon the lands, and the kingdom of Judah under Ahab was saved.

FARMING AND SONG

FARMING was the chief occupation of the people of Palestine from the earliest days. When the children of Israel reached the borders of the Promised and, the Prophet Moses wrote:

For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water. of fountains and depths that

spring out of valleys and hills:

A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey;

A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.

When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hast given thee. (Deut. 8:7-10).

When the crops failed, the Israelites turned to their Creator as the giver of rain and sunshine and the harvest. The prophet Joel writes:

Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God; for He hath given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. (Joel 2:23).

They had their planting songs as well as their harvest songs, and like the American Indians, they ascribed all the gifts of nature to a merciful and loving God who hears the call of them who place their faith in him. "Nature lovers are not afraid; they often seek a high hill when a storm is gathering, to watch the progress in silent reverence." So the psalmist describes a storm in words that are full of reverence for the power of God and his control of the storms.

Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength.

Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thundereth; the Lord is upon many waters.

The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars; yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.

He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.

The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire.

The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness; the Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.

The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests; and in His temple doth every one speak of His glory.

The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever.

The Lord will give strength unto His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace. (Psalm 29).

Like the Israelitish prophet, the Navajo sings of the rain:

Far as man can see,
Comes the rain,
Comes the rain with me.

From the rain Mount,
Rain Mount far away,
Comes the rain,
Comes the rain with me.

Mid the lightnings,
Mid the lightning zig-zag,
Mid the lightning flashing,
Comes the rain,
Comes the rain with me.

Through the pollen,
Through the pollen blest,
All in pollen hidden
Comes the rain,
Comes the rain with me.

Far as man can see,
Comes the rain,
Comes the rain with me.

Judea was never a great agricultural land or country, however. From the dawn of history it was a pastoral land, and "the figure of the shepherd with his flock moves across every page of her history." David, the greatest of her kings, and Amos, the first of her writing prophets, come from the sheep folds and from following their flocks. The figure of the shepherd is taken often to express the best aspect of human rule, and Jehovah is referred to as a shepherd of his people.

The cities of Palestine were small, even Jerusalem in all her glory did not rise to be a Babylon or Ninevah. In the book of Judges, it is called "Jebus, which is Jerusalem, the city of the Jebusites." (Judges 19:10-11). The city is situated in the midst of the mountaineous table land,

and is surrounded by beautiful valleys. It was the seat of Israelitish royalty, and became the centre of the chosen temple of God, which took the place of the old tabernacle of hosts.

If there is a place on earth sacred to the hearts of men, it is Bethlehem. "From that little town of Judah has gone forth a power which has affected the whole course of the world's history . . . . It was in Bethlehem that Jesus was born, whom prophets had foretold, and at whose coming choirs of angels sang aloud for joy Bethlehem was the centre of the beautiful idyl of the Book of Ruth. There was Nazareth not far from the Sea of Galilee and Mount Tabor, supposed to be the scene of our Lord's transfiguration. Nazareth was a beautiful little town in the days of the Saviour. "Gradually, the valley opens into a natural amphitheatre of hills," says Canon Farrar, "and there clinging to the hollows of a hill which rises to the height of some five hundred feet above it, lie 'like a handfull of pearls in a goblet of emeralds,' the flat roofs and narrow streets of Nazareth." Here Jesus spent nearly thirty years of his mortal life. There were the towns of Bethabara, and Cana and on the shores of the Mediterranean the ancient cities of Tyre and Sidon. Jesus, returning one time from Tyre and Sidon, "visited the ten famous cities of Decapolis," of which Damascus was the most important.

NATURE INSPIRES THE PROPHETS

THE lovely growths in nature often inspired the prophets to write. We find in the Bible hunting and harvest songs, and reference has been made to the songs of the shepherds. It is in the folk songs that we read much of of the history of any people, so it is with ancient Israel. When people sing at their work, they are, as a rule, a happy folk, working as they do for the realisation of an ideal. One of the finest of the songs of the Old Testament is that of the vineyard, found in Isaiah 5:1-7:

Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill:

And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that is should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.

What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth with grapes?

And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down:

And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

Like all people who are surrounded by high mountains, they lift up their eyes to the peaks and their souls to God. It is said that the Alps have always inspired the Swiss people to the highest ideals of freedom and joyful living. Have we not our hymn which is inspired by the mountains?

"Oh ye mountains high, where the clear, blue sky."

So Israel looked to the mountains, and the author of the 121st Psalm must have felt the spirit of the everlasting hill·

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

FOR THE YOUNG FOLKS

RODDY McDOWELL

By AUDREY CLARK REDDING

DO you know the picture most English boys get in their minds when they think of America? They imagine big sky-scrapers in the East and cowboys and Indians in the West. I know an English boy who went to America and, after marvelling at the tall buildings in New York, went west and was made an honorary chief of the Ute Indian tribe of Utah! You know him, too. His name is Roddy McDowall, and I am sure that most of you have seen him in the movies.

In a handsome costume of buckskin and feathers, Roddy became an Indian chief last year while he was in Utah for the premiere of "My Friend Flicka," which was filmed in the southern part of the state.

During the filming of the picture, Roddy had a wonderful time, and says he still can't believe that the beauty of Southern Utah's scenery is real. He and his mother made many friends there whom they will never forget, they told me.

Roddy first grew interested in Utah scenery and history through his friend, Dorothy Gagon, who graduated from the Wilshire Ward Primary in Los Angeles last year. Dorothy moved to California from Utah when she was a small girl. Her mother, Mildred, was for many years secretary to the California Misson and is now a counsellor in the presidency of the Los Angeles stake Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association.

Roddy admires Dorothy because she is such a happy, active (and pretty) girl, even though she had to have her right arm amputated several years ago after a fall from a tree. She never fusses about not being able to do something. She just goes ahead and does it. Roddy and she have shared many good times. He has shown her all through his movie studio and taken her to lunch at the "commissary on the lot," which means the restaurant at the studio. When he appeared on a radio show, she was his guest and they had a dinner party at the Hollywood Brown Derby after the broadcast. As their mothers are good friends, they often visit at one another's homes.

While Dorothy was vacationing in her home state one summer, she sent Roddy picture postcards of famous Utah beauty spots and he added them to his postcard collection. That collection is enormous! It contains cards from all over the world, and at least one-fourth of them are of Utah scenery and monuments.

Roddy collects many things besides postcards, but I was especially interested in the cards because of the large number from Utah. Some of them he received from Dorothy, some were sent by his "fans" and some he bought while making "My Friend Flicka."

"I'm pretty lucky," he said, "I get the girls in the mail department at the studio to save me all the postcards sent by fans from foreign countries, and lots of people I know save cards for me." He meant people like Walter Pigeon, Bette Davis, Joan Bennett, and Donald Crisp.

You would like Roddy's other collections, I know. The autographs would make your eyes pop. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Governor Herbert B. Maw of Utah, and almost any famous movie star or well-known writer you can think of have signed Roddy's autograph books. He also has a fine matchbook-cover and stamp collection.

His book collection is unusual. It contains autographed copies of books from

which his movies were made. Each one is autographed by the author as well as by the actors and studio workmen who helped make the picture. Maybe you will remember "How Green Was My Valley," by Richard Llewlyn, "The Pied Piper," by Nevil Shute," "My Friend Flicka," by Mary O'Hara, and "Lassie Come Home," by Eric Knight. On Roddy's bookshelf there is also a copy of President Heber J. Grant's "Gospel Standards," which was autographed by President Grant and presented to Roddy when he was in Salt Lake City for the premiere of "Flicka."

President Grant was recovering from an illness, so Roddy was told that he could have just a five-minute interview with him; but both of them had so much fun, it turned out to be a thirty-minute visit. "It was one of the most wonderful experiences of my life," Roddy said afterwards.

He keeps his collections at home in his pleasant room, which fashionable decorators would tell you has a "ship motif," meaning that the draperies, fixtures and bedspread have ship designs on them. But it isn't a fussy room. Any boy would be at home in it. On the wall Roddy has maps of war zones containing pins which he moves about as battles progress. He was in London during the Blitz, and one time, while he was working on a picture, he didn't put on pyjamas for several weeks. Everybody just slept in their clothes in the bomb shelters. Roddy's father was in the last war and is in the British Merchant Marines in this one. Pictures of him in the uniforms of both wars hang in Roddy's room.

"THE CHILDREN'S FRIEND."

RODDY and "FLICKA"

Dr. Bennion discusses

FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST

SUPPOSE a stranger should walk into your school-room to-morrow and say, "lay down your books, walk out of this school, leave your friends and father, mother, sister and brother and follow me. 'Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests,' but I have no place to lay my head, so you can expect to have none. Most men hate me, so they will hate you because of me. 'Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves' or your life will be taken." What would you do?

In such a manner, at the very outset of His ministry, Jesus called men to be His disciples.

"Walking by the sea of Galilee, He saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers. And He saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets and followed Him."

"And on going from thence, He saw two other brethren, James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, in a ship with Zebedee, their father, mending their nets; and He called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed Him."

These men were skilled fishermen, and probably knew no other vocation. James and John were partners with their own father. All of them had ties of affection with loved ones as well as their own material needs to satisfy, just as we have. Yet, when this young man of thirty years said, "Come, follow me," they heeded His bidding without hesitation. Why?

There seems to be only one answer. He appealed to them. When they looked into His eyes and countenance, and heard words fall from His lips, their hearts were filled with faith and hope. They were drawn irresistibly to this man of Nazareth.

Their association was not limited to great occasions when the power of God was manifested in miraculous ways. They also saw Him in the quiet routine of daily life. They ate, slept and talked with Him. No matter what they ate, Jesus always fed them the "bread of life." Sometimes they ate with others, even with sinners, and sometimes they ate alone in the privacy of an upper room.

These private suppers with the Saviour must have been cherished most of all, for He loved these disciples deeply, and could unburden His heart to them and reveal things which the multitude could not understand. The last of these private suppers is the most memorable. It was held in a large guest-room upstairs in a home at Jerusalem.

During the feast, Jesus did something He had never done before. Taking a loaf of bread or cake, He gave thanks and blessed it, and gave a piece to each disciple, saying:

"Take, eat . . . this is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me."

Then He took a cup of wine, gave thanks and blessed it, and gave it also to them, saying:

"Drink ye all of it; for this my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink of it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

After the death of Jesus the Apostles again met and partook of bread and the fruit of the vine, emblems of the Saviour's life. As often as they did this in His name they remembered His love for them and they must have felt their growing love for one another in their fellowship in Christ. This sacred ordinance kept alive their faith in Christ.

Dr. Lowell L. Bennion in "To-day and To-morrow."

Civilization waits upon the Answer

"TWENTY years ago, in a magazine article which he entitled "Shall We Committ Suicide?" Winston Churchill summed up the situation in these prophetic and eloquent paragraphs:

"It is established that nations who believe their life is at stake will not be restrained from using any means to secure their existence. It is probable—nay, certain—that among the means which will next time be at their disposal will be agencies and processes of destruction wholesale, unlimited, and, perhaps, once launched, uncontrollable.

"Mankind has never been in this position before. Without having improved appreciably in virtue or enjoying wiser guidance, it has got into its hands for the first time the tools by which it can unfailingly accomplish its own extermination. That is the point in human destinies to which all the glories and toils of men have at last led them.

"Death stands at attention, obedient, expectant, ready to serve, ready to shear away the peoples en masse; ready, if called on, to pulverise without hope of repair what is left of civilization. He awaits it from a frail, bewildered being, long his victim, now—for one occasion only—his master.

"This, then is the problem—far more immediate and acute to-day than it was twenty years ago. It cannot complacently be left to time to solve. We cannot count on geologic ages for the development of methods of social control. What we do in this generation and the next may well decide the kind of civilization, if any, which is to dominate the globe for centuries to come.

"We now have it within our power to tear the world to pieces whenever passion and emotion call the tune. We must hope that we have it within our power, too, although the opportunity may slip from our grasp, not soon to be regained, to make this Frankenstein creature, which we have built, the servant and not the master of the people.

"Nobody can be sure of the precise formula by which this end can be achieved. All that we know is that it will take knowledge and wisdom almost beyond what seems available at the moment.

"It will require sacrifice, for nothing worth while is ever gained without it, and no nation can bargain itself into security. It will mean the scrappings of the shibboleths and catchwords, hoary with age, which have cluttered up our thinking and ourselves and our relations to the rest of the world.

"We must be fearless in our devising, ready to cast out intolerance and partisan advocacy, unafraid of new plans for cooperative action, even when they run counter to traditions and techniques which have long been cherished.

"And we must draw on all the resources to which access can be had—spiritual resources, the contribution of the humanities and the social sciences, the common hopes of people in all countries, the ties that bind the human race together across boundary lines, the innate decency of the masses of mankind when freed from perverted leadership, the hunger of plain men everywhere for justice and truth if only someone will tell them what they are.

"We must face the unevadable fact that the peril at hand is of vast proportions, and we must be armed with boldness, imagination and a buoyant faith if we are to meet it.

"Shall we succeed or shall we fail in organising the world for peace? The future, indeed the destiny, of everything that we mean by the word civilization waits upon the answer to that question."

Raymond B. Fosdick in the "New York Times."

HOW CAN I QUIT TOBACCO?

By Dr. L. WESTON OAKS M.D.

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS ISSUE

5. Is There Any Drug That Can be Used to Help Me Break the Desire for a Smoke?

Many things have been used for this, at one time and another. Some of them probably are of more or less aid, but must be taken under a physician's guidance to be safe. Perhaps the most useful simple thing is a mouth wash of silver nitrate solution. This is obtained at the chemist, and should contain three grains of silver nitrate to each fluid ounce of solution. An amount of this equal to one or two teaspoonsful is taken into the mouth and held there for thirty seconds then discarded, without swallowing any of it. The taste is undesirable, and if used when the craving becomes troublesome, it may be of considerable help.

6. Since the Mental Habit Will be My Most Difficult Problem, What Things Can I do That Will Help Me There?

Each individual's natural ingenuity may suggest little things which will prove beneficial in his particular circumstances. There are certain underlying principles governing the conquest of this force, among which are:

(a) **Avoid idleness as you would the plague.** This one thing may make or break your effort. An idle mind is bad company for such a job. If your work requires sitting still and not doing much but being there, carry a suitable booklet in your pocket and crowd the minutes with thoughts outside yourself. If this is not permissible because of the nature of your duties, you may memorise interesting material and go over it during those minutes between. You will be surprised at how much you may accomplish in mental advancement and cultivation, no matter where you may be.

(b) **Avoid idle companions.** There is no need to hurt or offend them. One can always get around wounding feelings, with a little kindness and tact. When you are faced with some time that would ordinarily be spent under such conditions, go to the library and get acquainted with the numerous authors there waiting to offer you inspiration, growth, friendship, or entertainment. Take your companions along if they will go. You may be able to help them unconsciously begin traveling a different and more interesting road.

(c) **Don't go to the cinema as a pastime,** unless there is some particularly good picture you wish to see. The average film today is made a powerful medium of advertising for both liquor and tobacco, and will increase the difficulty of one who is trying to break the habit of using either.

In this the radio is at least equally guilty, and you will do well to select with some discretion the programmes you listen to, at least for a time. Find something more interesting to do—notably reading of good books. You will discover that much has passed you by if you have not been reading. No one who is living a full-rounded life has any time to kill.

(d) The nervous part of tobacco habitism also involves what might be called a **smoker's neurosis.** His habit of holding cigar, cigarette, or pipe becomes so much a part of him that he unconsciously goes through motions of flicking ash or of placing the smoke to his mouth, when he is not actually smoking. These are habit motions, and they themselves will often remind the smoker to light a cigarette, when he really does not crave its effect especially. Such occurrences are extremely common in the presence of any strain, nervousness, or uneasiness. As one professional man, long a smoker, put it: "Whenever the conversation lags or you do not know what to do with your

hands, lighting a cigarette fills the bill." Under these conditions, a person will often light a cigarette, take a few draws upon it, then extinguish it, only to light another in ten to twenty minutes and repeat the same process.

It is of interest that these habit motions do not occur if hands and lips are otherwise engaged in some activity. This in a measure points the remedy. Keep hands and lips otherwise employed. Such may involve chewing of gum, occupation of the hands in carrying some object, as a pair of gloves, book, walking stick, etc. Each person will have, more or less, to evolve his solution of this according to his individual circumstances and programme.

(e) Although it sounds more than a little ridiculous, it is none the less true that wearing a blindfold when smoking reduces greatly the sense of satisfaction of the smoker. Because of this, such a measure has proved of some help to those having a difficult time to break the habit. It has been said that most smokers who go blind cease to smoke because the trouble of doing it is not justified by what they receive.

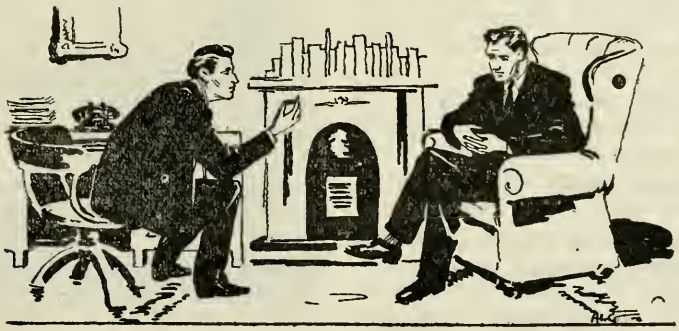
7. Is There any Reason to Fear That Stopping Tobacco Will Further Damage the Health of One Who is Frail, from Other Causes, Such as a Bad Heart?

None at all. What one is doing by stopping the tobacco is the withdrawal of a poison which has never been known to bring to the human body one single benefit, large or small, and which is definitely harmful to human health in many demonstrable ways. When a person is found to be suffering from chronic arsenic poisoning, the first thing is to find the source of the drug and stop it from getting into his body. The logic and results are the same in both cases.

8. Why, if This is True, have Some Physicians Actually Advised Their Patients to Take up Smoking?

A physician is only a human being with special training along medical lines. Upon the basis of his training plus his personal opinion, he plans and carries out the treatment of his patients. Should his knowledge be weak in some particular, such as in the effects of nicotine upon the human body, he is likely to give wrong advice. Little, if any, time is actually given to study of this particular subject in any medical college in the land, yet there is ample material available. No physician with full knowledge of just what nicotine does to the blood vessels, heart, and nervous system of him who uses it ever deliberately advised a patient for whose care he was responsible, to take up tobacco. In addition, every smoker, whether physician or mule skinner, loves his smoke, and does not go out of his way to learn facts which, if he believed them, would only serve to make him uncomfortable about doing what he likes.

—" Improvement Era "



CHRISTMAS CAROL 1944

JOHNNIE "TUBBY" MERRYWEATHER was a live wire. No doubt about that. He thought of the idea. He worked it. He got results such as no one else could have done.

He muttered to himself as he stood on the step of Enoch Snell's house:

"Funny, fancy old Mrs. Higgs giving half-a-crown. You never can tell—spirit of Christmas, I s'pose," and he totted up his takings by the light of a weak-batteried torch. There being no response to his knock at the door, he knocked again. Shuffling footsteps sounded on the other side of it. The door was flung wide open and Enoch Snell demanded:

"Well, what is it?"

Tubby beamed. Unfortunately, his beaming was ineffective. There was no light in Snell's hall and Tubby's torch was respectfully directed downwards.

"I've called," he said, "to ask for a contribution towards our Christmas Gift Fund for the children who have been bombed-out in this neighbourhood."

"Oh," rasped Snell ominously, "you have, have you!"

This seemed unnecessary to Tubby, but he continued to beam—ineffectively. Snell was a tall man, spare, and he stooped slightly. His voice was very rasping, as if his vocals were serrated and crossed each other at every sound he made. The reflected light from Tubby's downward torch indicated him as standing feet astride, arms akimbo, in, if anything, a threatening stance. Undismayed, Tubby said:

"Yes, we have checked on them all. We know where they all are and we wish to send them each a present."

"I see," replied Snell. "Well, you'll get nothing out of me."

Tubby's facial beam was cut off, and he hesitated before saying:

"Why not?"

"Why not?" snapped Snell. "Because I don't see any point in giving away my money to other people's kids. Looks to me as if I shall need it to put my place shipshape." He stopped, then said quickly, at a thought: "Here, come in here a minute, will you? I'll show you why not," and he turned and preceded Tubby along his passage. Tubby stepped after him. Snell entered his kitchen and, turning round, began: "Now look——" but seeing Tubby's bright, red-cheeked face now beaming again, he altered his remark to: "What are you laughing at, eh? I s'pose you had nothing happen to you, but listen to me, this is the only room I can use. I sleep in the cellar under the stairs. I've got to work over Christmas, so there'll be no Christmas cheer for me."

Merryweather looked about him. There was nothing wrong with the room except that the window was non-existent and the empty panes were supplanted with weatherproof cloth.

"Well, you're fairly comfortable here, anyway," he said.

"You think so?" rattled Snell. "Come out here, then," and he led the way into the passage again. He trod the stairs heavily while Tubby waddled in his rear. Snell flashed a bright torch around the walls and ceilings of the upper floor. Large patches of plaster had been blasted from them. Through one ceiling the unsympathetic rain had dripped and a bath was placed expectantly beneath it. A window-frame had been wrenched from its position and a two-inch gap allowed the cold air to whistle through. "See that —and that?" said Snell throatily, indicating the "thats" with his torch. "And the repair men don't look like reaching me for weeks yet, with the damage like it is in this area."

Tubby panted. The climb had raced his heart slightly and his cheeks were now vivid.

"Well, I still don't think you're so badly off, Mr. Snell," he said.

"No?" barked Enoch Snell truculently.

"You got half an hour to spare, old man?" Tubby interrupted.

"What for?"

"Come along with me, will you?" requested Tubby, and, turning, he waddled down the stairs and along the passage and out into the porch, fully expecting Enoch Snell to follow him, which Snell did, putting on his cap and coat as he did so.

They made an odd pair. Short, rotund Tubby; tall, spare Snell.

"Where are you taking me?" rasped Snell.

"Just down the road," answered Tubby.

He took Snell past houses familiar to them both. The moon was full and although obscured by light rain cloud, its light shone on the white patches where windows had been temporarily "first-aided." Tarpaulins covered roofs; diagonally placed timbers propped walls, a lampost was bent grotesquely as if some giant demon hand had "shown off" its strength, and as they drew nearer to where the actual bomb had fallen in the street only gaunt shells of houses remained until even they gave way to a mishappen mass of rubble, bricks, twisted pipes and battered hot-water tanks.

Tubby pointed to a house-skeleton.

"See that?" he said. "That was a house; but it was more than that, Mr. Snell. Six weeks ago it was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Rolfe and their littluns. Do you know where they are now? They are in three rooms, with only the barest furniture. One kiddie was killed, one will never walk again." Snell was silent. Tubby pointed again. "Over there," he continued, "lived the Misses White, spinster girls who had adopted a little nine-years-old nephew. He was an orphan. His parents were killed six months ago by a bomb. Those women are dead, he is absolutely alone now."

"That doesn't make my lot any better, does it?"

Snell spoke spiritlessly.

"No," replied Tubby, "but, Mr. Snell, compared with others, you are very fortunate. You **are** alive to see the end of all this horror. Your house **can** be repaired. These people will never know their homes as they were again. Think of it, Snell," and he spoke huskily now, "it must have taken 'em years to build those homes—and they are all destroyed in a flash."

"'S'pose you're right," admitted Enoch. "What do you say you want to do?"

Tubby hadn't quite finished.

"Mr. Snell—d'you see that space over there?" He indicated a heap of rubble, fronted by a fence and neatly trimmed hedge and mosaic path leading up to what had been the threshold of a house. Snell looked. "That," said Tubby very quietly, "was my little shack." He swallowed hard and was silent for a moment. "I'm alone in the world," he continued. "My wife died at the birth of our first baby eleven years ago on Christmas Day." He swallowed harder this time, then blew his nose.

Snell patted his shoulder clumsily, thrust his hands in his pockets, turned round, looked up at the moon, then looked at his feet.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Snell," mumbled Tubby Merryweather, "but we've all got our troubles."

"Look here, chum," said Snell more throatily than ever," I'll help you, how much do you want?"

Tubby fumbled for his list and pencil.

"That's up to you, Mr. Snell," he said, "entirely up to you. There are about fifty-five children affected and we aimed to spend five shillings each on them, but already our hopes have been exceeded far beyond that."

They began to walk back. Suddenly Enoch Snell blurted out:

"Merryweather, I've lived a mean life. I'm worth a bob or two more than I need to keep me the rest of it. If I'd been killed—what good would it have done me? I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll make your money up to ten shillings per child. Now—get a place to have it—and we'll give a party to the street, invite everybody. I'll pay the expenses." They had reached his gate. "Well, do that, will you, Merryweather?" he said, and without waiting for an answer, turned abruptly and walked up his path. He called "Goodnight" from his door and went in.

Down the road a group of treble voices piped:

"While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground;
An angel of the Lord came down
And glory shone around."

And the moon came out from behind the clouds and shone brightly in all her glory.

Reader, if you should think Enoch Snell's conversion too swift to be real, consider for a moment 'ere you pass judgment. There comes a moment in the life of every man when his heart is touched. Sometimes men disregard the touch, fend it off. Some continue to fend it off for years before the real value of love penetrates their self-constructed armour. Then, perhaps, the simplest incident will change them.

The transition from life to life eternal through what we call death is sometimes swift, sometimes wrought in long suffering. The Lord knows his own. He will call loudest when He needs them most.

J. P. H.

★ **London has already announced her attitude towards "The Rocket": our lights are to go up, and with them our spirits. We will work with redoubled energy to find shelter for our homeless thousands. We will try to make of London a city worthy for our Children to return to; and in the days to come we will recall with pride that of all the capitals of Europe, London, the city that never capitulated, was the city that fought to the end.**

"Evening Standard"

Christmas

NUMEROUS indeed are the hearts to which Christmas brings a brief season of happiness and enjoyment. How many families whose members have been dispersed and scattered far and wide, in the restless struggle of life, are then reunited, and meet once again in that happy state of companionship and mutual goodwill which is a source of such pure and unalloyed delight, and one so incompatible with the cares and sorrows of the world, that the religious belief of the most civilised nations, and the rude traditions of the roughest savages, alike number it among the first days of a future state of existence, provided for the blest and happy! How many old recollections, and how many dormant sympathies Christmas time awakens!

We write these words now, many miles distant from the spot at which, year after year, we met on that day, a merry and joyous circle. Many of the hearts that throbbed so gaily then have ceased to beat; many of the looks that shone so brightly then have ceased to glow; the hands we grasped have grown cold; the eyes we sought have hid their lustre in the grave; and yet the old house, the room, the merry voices and smiling faces, the jest, the laugh, the most minute and trivial circumstances connected with those happy meetings, crowd upon our mind at each recurrence of the season, as if the last assemblage had been but yesterday.

Happy, happy Christmas that can win us back to the delusions of our childish days, recall to the old man the pleasures of his youth, and transport the traveller back to his own fireside and quiet home!

CHARLES DICKENS

JOSEPH SMITH

BORN DECEMBER 23, 1805

SON OF FARM FOLK. IN HIS BOYHOOD ALWAYS MEDITATIVE. AT THE AGE OF FIFTEEN DECIDED TO GO DIRECT TO THE LORD, ACTING ON THE ADVICE OF JAMES, IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES. IN REPLY RECEIVED A VISITATION FROM GOD THE FATHER AND HIS SON JESUS CHRIST.

AFTER TUTORSHIP AND PREPARATION AT THE HANDS OF A HEAVENLY MESSENGER WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN ESTABLISHING GOD'S CHURCH ON THE EARTH IN THIS, THE DISPENSATION OF THE FULLNESS OF TIMES.

THIS, AT THE AGE OF TWENTY-FIVE. FROM THEN ON CONTINUED TO PREACH AND EXPOUND, EXHORT AND ORGANISE AND, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, PROMULGATE THE WORK OF THE LORD. RECEIVED OVER ONE HUNDRED COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE LORD. TRANSLATED FROM GOLDEN PLATES, WHAT IS TO-DAY KNOWN AS THE BOOK OF MORMON, A RECORD OF THE ANCIENT INHABITANTS OF THE AMERICAN CONTINENT.

AT THE AGE OF THIRTY-EIGHT MET A MARTYR'S DEATH AT THE HANDS OF AN INFURIATED MOB.

HIS WORK LIVES ON!

"PRAISE TO HIS MEMORY, HE DIED AS A MARTYR; HONOURED AND BLESSED BE HIS EVER GREAT NAME."

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